

# Air Reserve Personnel UPDATE

HQ Air Reserve Personnel Center, Denver, Colo.

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*One Air Force, Same Fight -- An Unrivaled Wingman*

## *Names and Faces*



Wendy Hnat  
Human Resource Assistant

With each issue, the Air Reserve Personnel Center would like to introduce the members of the ARPC Team who serve our customers every day.

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A pararescueman of the 920th Rescue Squadron brings up one of the 4,305 residents rescued by Air Force aviators. (Courtesy photo)

## Military historians record troops' JTF-Katrina effort

By Capt. Julie Shively  
*Air Force Historical Research Agency*

While much has been publicized about Hurricane Katrina's victims, there has been little media attention on military efforts to help New Orleans citizens cope in the aftermath of the killer hurricane's devastation. Katrina's wrath resulted in the single largest joint military humanitarian relief effort in U.S. history.

Over the past year, Reserve historians have continued extended deployments to publish a manuscript documenting Joint Task Force Katrina's historic military relief efforts. Through research, written narratives, and the transcription of more than 400 digitally recorded interviews, the courageous stories of military rescues and front-line medical care are finally coming to light.

Within 12 hours of landfall of the third largest hurricane ever to hit our nation, rescue

assets from all branches of the U.S. military were operating on the ground and in helicopters over New Orleans and Mississippi.

When the calls came, servicemembers put their lives on hold.

-- Col. Leonard Coleman, 4th Mission Support Group commander at Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., had just returned from golfing. Within 12 hours, he was standing up the 4th Air Expeditionary Group at New Orleans International Airport.

-- Senior Airman Nidia Barragan, of the 573rd Global Support Squadron at Travis AFB, Calif., and her daughter were driving to Santa Cruz to enjoy the weekend; four hours later, Airman Barragan was headed to New Orleans.

-- Master Sgt. Matthew Wells, a 48th Rescue Squadron pararescueman from Davis-

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See KATRINA, Page 4

# Air Force Reserve changes officer promotion system

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- Air Force Reserve Command is changing its officer promotion system to meet future total force requirements.

The command implemented the changes starting with the Oct. 16 Air Force Reserve line and non-line colonel promotion selection board, with results of the board to be announced early next year.

In one change, the command combined Selected Reserve (Categories A and B) and Participating Individual Ready Reserve, or PIRR, (Category E) officers into a single promotion group.

"All participating members should have the same opportunity and compete with each other for promotion," said Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of the Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander.

"This change is especially prudent in light of our strategic shift to an operational Reserve, increased total force integration, and challenges posed by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission and Program Budget Decision 720," General Bradley said.

In addition, in recent years the Air Force Reserve promoted more lieutenant colonels to colonel than it had available colonel positions. This prompted the command to adjust the promotion opportunity for its line officers competing for colonel from 45 percent to 40 percent.

At the same time, command officials decided to stop holding continuation boards for lieutenant colonels to remain in the Air Force Reserve beyond their mandatory separation date of 28 years total federal commissioned service.

The decision to form one competitive promotion category was not done in a "vacuum," General Bradley said.

"I chartered a general officer-led promotions working group in July 2006 with cross-functional representation to

"This change confirms the command's commitment to a robust and viable PIRR," said Col. Becky Lewis, director of personnel in the Office of Air Force Reserve. "It considers all participating members together, allowing us to fol-

***"All participating members should have the same opportunity and compete with each other for promotion."***



**-- Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley  
chief of the Air Force Reserve  
and AFRC commander**

weigh all the different options of changing the competitive categories and taking better care of our people," he said. "This was the best recommendation the group proposed and the right thing to do for our citizen Airmen."

The team consisted of a cross-section of reservists. They included senior officers from AFRC headquarters, a wing commander, a squadron commander, a readiness management group detachment commander and functional managers from line and non-line career fields, as well as legal and personnel experts from the Air Reserve Personnel Center, AFRC headquarters and the Office of Air Force Reserve.

Under force shaping actions, the Air Force Reserve will shift some of its member authorizations from paid positions in the Selected Reserve to nonpaid status in the Participating Individual Ready Reserve.

low personnel management policies that enable and identify the force most suited to meet mission requirements."

Changing promotion opportunities for lieutenant colonels and eliminating boards to keep them beyond their mandatory separation dates were necessary, said Col. Shaun Kelleher, chief of the directorate of personnel's force management policy division in the Office of Air Force Reserve.

"These changes will help manage our colonel production more efficiently and enable a reasonable expectation for colonel-selects to pin-on in a timely manner," he said.

"Simply stated, we have too many people making colonel and not enough positions for them. This has made it increasingly harder for colonel-selects to find Reserve jobs in a timely manner and pin on their new rank," he said.

(Courtesy of AFRC News Service)

*Air Reserve Personnel*

**UPDATE**

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## TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS)



# Qualified reservists offered Tricare Reserve Select

By Tech. Sgt. J.C. Woodring  
Air Reserve Personnel Center Public Affairs

**T**housands of Guard and Reserve Airmen in the Selected Reserve are now eligible to purchase health insurance from Tricare for them and their families.

Tricare Reserve Select offers three-tiered medical coverage to all members of the Selected Reserve, said Joyce Nackowicz, a Tricare Reserve Select representative at the Air Reserve Personnel Center headquarters here.

The tiers are determined by the servicemember's status: Tier 1 – contingency driven for operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, Tier 2 – unemployed with state benefits, self-employed or employed without benefits, Tier 3 – other Selected Reserve.

To certify their eligibility, the servicemembers must first file an intent on the Guard/Reserve Portal and then complete the Department of Defense Form 2895, "Agreement to Serve in the Selected Reserve for Tricare Reserve Select." Once the forms are completed, Guard Airmen turn them in to their units and reservists submit them to ARPC.

Reservists can fax the forms and supporting documentation to 303-676-6298 or DSN 926-6298. They also can scan the forms and e-mail them to [arpc.contactcenter@arpc.denver.af.mil](mailto:arpc.contactcenter@arpc.denver.af.mil) or attach them to a new request online at [https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-](https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/newrequest.asp)

[GR/newrequest.asp](https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/newrequest.asp).

While the coverage is the same for each of the tiers, the premiums are different, according to the TRS Web site.

The first tier, and least expensive, is offered to Airmen who have been released from at least 90 days of active-duty service during a contingency. They can apply for the coverage while in an active-duty status or within 90 days of leaving active duty.

"It's very important that they do not miss the 90 days," Ms. Nackowicz said. "The law was written to give them the extra 90 days. If they apply late, there is nothing we can do for them."

She said she recommends that people apply while they are still on active duty because they have easy access to their commanders who must sign the form.

For Selected Reserve Airmen who are not on a contingency order, they must apply during the open season each year from Sept. 1 and Oct. 31 for Tier 2 or 3 coverage to begin in the new year. Tricare payments must be postmarked by Nov. 25.

An exception to the annual open season is made for people with a "qualifying life event," who have 60 days from the event to purchase, change or terminate coverage. The assistant secretary of defense for health affairs designated these events as "a change in immediate family composition" or "a change in employment of the member or spouse that affects the coverage status of the member or member's family."

Once Ms. Nackowicz and others on her team verify eligibility, they update the information in the Military Personnel Data System and the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System. Then, they notify the servicemember of his or her eligibility for coverage by phone or e-mail.

After their information is entered into DEERS, the servicemembers need to log into the Tricare Guard-Reserve portal to print a personalized enrollment form, which is only available online. After completing and printing the form, the servicemember must submit it with the correct one-month premium to the regional Tricare contractor.

Tricare officials caution that they will not process the request form if the correct payment is not enclosed or the form is incomplete or inaccurate. The contractor will notify the servicemember if the request form has errors.

Requests received outside the annual open season, unless for a qualifying life event or new accession, will be returned along with any premium payments, Tricare officials said.

For details, visit the TRS Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/reserveselect/index.cfm> or call the Reserve Personnel Contact Center toll free at 800-525-0102 or DSN 926-6528.

Reserve officials recently announced that drilling reservists can enroll in Tricare Standard for Selected Reserve starting Oct. 1. Under this program, they pay 28 percent of premiums, and the government picks up the rest.

### *Quick reference listing of online assistance*

Guard/Reserve Portal  
<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr/privacyAction.do>

Tricare Reserve Select  
<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/reserveselect/index.cfm>

vPC-GR requests  
<https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/newrequest.asp>



Airmen of the 55th Rescue Squadron load hurricane evacuees into a helicopter in New Orleans. (Courtesy photo)

## KATRINA from Page 1

Monthan AFB, Ariz., was with his wife in the obstetrician's office when his call came.

Search and rescue squadrons as well as military medical response teams led the military's relief effort. As many as 70 times a day, helicopter hoist operators lowered Airmen into water or onto rooftops and sludge-filled streets. Sometimes they swung them onto balconies to make life-saving rescues. With almost every hoist, the Airmen returned cradling at least one person. Days were long, muscles ached, but saving just one life was worth the fatigue, said Tech. Sgt. Ronny Werle, a 55th Rescue Squadron hoist operator from Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

"We were told we would have a four-hour familiarization flight on our first day," Sergeant Werle said. "Our familiarization flight lasted 30 seconds. Everyone was on their roofs, so we immediately began to rescue them. We just picked a group of people to save, and there were so many it would take two or three lifts to get them. At the end of the day, we were exhausted but excited because we were helping our own."

As dramatic rescues continued around the clock, the Airmen said a sense of urgency arose to process sick and injured survivors. As they tended to Katrina victims, the medics at the New Orleans International Airport were described as exhibiting the same quiet heroism of battlefield medics.

Lt. Col. Lawrence Riddles, 375th Medical Group commander from Scott AFB, Ill., arrived with his team to evacuate the injured from the airport.

He said debris littered the ramp and hallways. Injured and dead victims lined terminals lacking light, air conditioning, water or security.

Colonel Riddles' team, along with National Defense Medical System Teams, set up a terminal for triage. Day after day, the team worked as the helicopters continually landed with injured people.

Air Force medics evacuated more than 2,800 injured people from the airport in 48 hours and another 2,700 within the week.

"Creating a critical care treatment facility out of a hurricane-damaged airport," Riddles said, "required innovation and flexibility."

Katrina patients differed from normally healthy, but injured military troops. The typical patients at the airport were chronically ill, elderly and weak, he said. Many needed wheelchairs and similar equipment absent from the standard military deployment packages.

Some situations departed from typical military medical training because of other rescues. In one such rescue, a military member had to rescue a dog, that had jumped 20 feet to a transformer, and the civilian that had tried to save the dog, but found himself trapped. Soon, other victims learned that if their pets were stranded, the military would rescue them too.



A 920th Rescue Squadron Airman from Patrick AFB, Fla., holds a rescued cat safely in a helmet bag. (Courtesy photo)

"This was an American city that took one on the chin. We were Americans helping Americans," said Col. Richard Walberg, 818th Contingency Response Group commander from McGuire AFB, N.J. "We integrated with every agency that came down with us, and anybody that was at that airport had one

vision and that was to help the citizens of New Orleans. I know I can sleep at night because I executed my mission."

The JTF-Katrina historians said they look forward to revealing the contributions of all branches of the military.

Once complete, the published manuscript will be forwarded to the repository at the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, Ala.



# DOD to resume anthrax vaccinations

WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- The Department of Defense announced Oct. 16 a resumption of the mandatory Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program for military members, emergency-essential DOD civilians and contractors, based on geographic areas or roles.

For the most part, mandatory vaccinations are limited to military units designated for homeland bioterrorism defense and to U.S. forces assigned to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility and Korea.

The undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness will issue implementing instructions to the military services for resuming the mandatory program within 30 to 60 days.

"The anthrax vaccine will protect our troops from another threat -- a disease that will kill, caused by a bacteria that already has been used as a weapon in America, and that terrorists openly discuss," said Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

The policy also allows those previously immunized against anthrax, who are no longer deployed to higher threat areas, to receive fol-

low-up doses and booster shots on a voluntary basis.

Under the voluntary vaccination policy, implemented during the period of a court injunction throughout 2005, the voluntary acceptance rate was about 50 percent.

"This rate of vaccination not only put the service members at risk, but also jeopardized unit effectiveness and degraded medical readiness. The threat environment and the unpredictable nature of terrorism make it necessary to include biological warfare defense as part of our force protection measures," Dr. Winkenwerder said.

Anthrax is a deadly infection, and the vaccine is an important force protection measure to combat it. In the fall of 2001, 22 cases of anthrax resulted from attacks through the U.S. postal system. Five people died in these attacks.

The Food and Drug Administration has repeatedly found, and independent medical experts have confirmed, that the vaccine is safe and effective.

For details on the anthrax vaccination program, visit [www.vaccines.mil](http://www.vaccines.mil) or [www.vaccines.mil/anthrax](http://www.vaccines.mil/anthrax).



Mandatory anthrax vaccinations will resume soon. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Keith Reed)

## Briefs

### *vPC-GR to launch awards, decorations online*

Starting Nov. 20, all eligible members of the Air Force Reserve will submit and process awards and decorations via the virtual Personnel Center Guard and Reserve, a 24/7 customer service Web



portal operated by the Air Reserve Personnel Center here.

This new Web-enabled service is available any time from anywhere in

the world and will give Airmen the ability to submit someone for an award or decoration. Reservists can log on to the vPC-GR at <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/support/default.asp> to begin the process.

### *General officer retirements*

Reserve general officers should not use the online retirement system to apply for transfer to the retired reserve. They must apply for retirement by submitting their Air Force Form 131, Application for Transfer to the Retired Reserve, through their chain of command, AF/RESOMO, and the chief of AFR.

### *Flight attendants needed*

The 932nd Airlift Wing at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., continues to hire flight attendants for its C-9C and C-40 distinguished-visitor missions. Applicants must qualify for a top secret clearance, be available to fly a 10-day trip every three months and be within the Air Force fit-to-flight standards. Also, they must pass a board interview process and meet flight physical requirements as a flying crew member. For more details, call 618-229-7173.

### *Professional Development Seminars*

The AFRC Professional Development Center is soliciting candidates to attend two professional development seminar opportunities in Washington, D.C.

The **Reserve Components Joint Officer Professional Development Seminar** will be Feb. 5-7 and will include a joint services agenda, session with the chief of Air Force Reserve and attendance at selected portions of the Reserve Officers Association's midwinter conference. The seminar registration fee will be the full ROA registration fee. This fee will also include an Air Force section luncheon and the Wednesday evening banquet. Attendance is unit funded.

**Leadership Today & Tomorrow** is a seminar for majors and lieutenant colonels. It is scheduled for Feb. 3-6 and will focus on career and leadership issues and feature participation of Air Force Reserve Command senior leaders. In addition, the seminar will feature the chief of the Air Force Reserve. The remaining agenda will focus on a variety of topics including accountability, mentoring and current Reserve issues. Participants will have a unique opportunity to interact closely with senior AFRC leaders.

Enrollment for both seminars is open until Nov. 30. Quotas are allocated to the AFRC units and Reserve Management Group for individual mobilization augmentees. Wing commanders should nominate candidates to HQ AFRC/A1TP (Professional Development Center.)

E-mail nominations (1-primary/1-alternate) to Mickey Crawford at [mickey.crawford@afrc.af.mil](mailto:mickey.crawford@afrc.af.mil) or fax to DSN 497-0234 by Nov. 30. Provide name, rank, home mailing address, daytime telephone number, e-mail address and unit orders point of contact for each candidate.

For details, call Ms. Crawford at DSN 497-0933 or 800-223-1784 Ext. 0933.



Starting Oct. 1, drilling reservists, like these Airmen from the 419th Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, can enroll in the new Tricare Standard for Selected Reserve. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Owens)

## Health care for reservists highlights defense bill

WASHINGTON -- In addition to a 2.2 percent across-the-board pay raise, Air Force reservists can look forward to better health-care options in 2007.

Starting Oct. 1, drilling reservists can enroll in the new Tricare Standard for Selected Reserve health plan. They pay 28 percent of the premiums. The federal government picks up the rest of the tab.

People covered by the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program are not eligible for the new plan.

The plan replaces the current three-tier Tricare Reserve Select system. The first tier starts with \$81 monthly premiums for reservists without dependents who recently participated in a contingency operation. Cost of the plan jumps to \$767 a month for nondeployed reservists and their families who are eligible to sign up for employer-provided health care.

Another new benefit of the fiscal 2007 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into law by the president Oct. 17,

**Reservists will pay  
28 percent of the  
premiums. The federal  
government picks up  
the rest of the tab.**

helps reservists without dependents who were mobilized for 139 or more days in support of a contingency operation.

It permits a second housing allowance in lieu of per diem if reservists are ordered to serve at a location too far from home to commute.

This allowance is retroactive to Oct. 1, 2006. However, payment of this allowance is up to service secretaries and does not automatically apply to everyone who is eligible.

Reservists in the Selected Reserve who

think they may be eligible for a second BAH payment must check with their particular service for the current policy.

Another provision of the authorization bill extends the maximum number of days reservists can be called to active duty under Title 10 of the U.S. Code, Section 12304. The revised Presidential Reserve Call-up changed from a maximum of 270 days to 365 days.

The age before mandatory separation from service for nonpromotion changed to age 64 for major generals and to age 62 for brigadier generals and below.

The authorization act also extended or expanded other allowances for reservists. Air Force Reserve Command may or may not fund these allowances.

More information about the authorization act is available on the Office of Air Force Reserve Web site under the Policy Integration Directorate's information page. (AFRC News Service)